

# Supplementary Statement re Community Use and Parking Provision

**2025/0532 CONVERSION OF AND ALTERATIONS TO VACANT  
CHURCH TO RESIDENTIAL USE TO PROVIDE 11 APARTMENTS**

**FORMER CHURCH PREMISES, WAKEFIELD ROAD, SMITHIES,  
BARNSELY S711NP**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This supplementary statement has been prepared to address matters relating to community use and parking provision that have been raised by the LPA during the course of the application.

## 2. COMMUNITY USE

Policy E7 sets out that new uses of places of worship will be allowed when it can be shown that:

The business or facility cannot be economically successful; or

The change of use would not have a significance effect on the ability of local people to access local services.

The church was sold at auction in December 2024. It had actually closed in 2021, so had been vacant for over 3 years prior to the sale. We have contacted the Wesleyan Reform Union about the reasons for closure, and the Union has confirmed that this was due to a diminished congregation. This is clearly indicative of their not being a demand for the use of the site as a church,

Furthermore, there are six other Wesleyan Reform Churches within the Barnsley circuit, so the closure of the Smithies Church has not had any effect on the ability of local people to access local services.

Policy I2 states that such uses will be protected from development unless it can be demonstrated that the sites and premises are no longer required by the existing or an alternative community facility.

The site being no longer required by the existing facility is addressed above. In terms of alternative community facilities, no interest from any kind of community facility was received when the site was being marketed and then sold at auction. The site needs significant investment to bring it back into use, and there is no realistic prospect of it being viable for community use. Policy I2 also needs to be considered in light of the LPA's lack of housing supply. The benefits of housing provision far outweigh the loss of a community facility, especially when that community facility had been vacant for a long time, was not needed and has no prospect of becoming an alternative community use.

### **3.0 PARKING PROVISION**

11 parking spaces are proposed for the flats. It is understood that the LPA would wish to see provision for visitor parking. There is no available space for additional parking, without compromising on the provision of outdoor amenity space. The 11 spaces can, however, be configured to best suit the LPA's requirements. If it preferable for one of the flats to not have dedicated parking, in order to free up a visitor parking space, then this is entirely feasible. The specific allocation of the parking spaces can be secured by way of condition.

In terms of overall parking provision, the scheme strikes a balance between providing enough parking, amenity space and ensuring the development is viable. The site is in a highly sustainable location which will promote more sustainable modes of transport than private car use. Whilst below the standard, we feel that the level of parking is entirely proportionate to the development and its highly sustainable and accessible location.

Whilst it is expected that the sustainable location will ensure many trips to the flats can be made by modes other than private cars, if visitors do choose to arrive by car, then there are plentiful off-site parking options in the locality. The areas near to the site where additional on-street parking could be problematic (such as the A61) are already controlled by double yellow lines. In other areas whereby on-street parking is safe and available, the low level of

demand generated by visitors to the flats would be indiscernible from existing everyday levels of parking.

#### **4. REFUSE COLLECTION**

To overcome the concerns raised about the travel distance to the proposed bin store area, it is proposed to have a private collection arrangement in place. The applicant is happy for this to be conditioned.